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UNCLAS HARARE 000280

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR AF/S AND AF/EX  
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JFRAZER  
USDOC FOR 2037 DIEMOND  
PASS USTR ROSA WHITAKER  
TREASURY FOR ED BARBER AND C WILKINSON  
DEPT PASS USAID FOR MARJORIE COPSON

E. O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAGR](#) [ETRD](#) [EFIN](#) [ECON](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: White Farmers Remain Divided

Ref: a) Harare 239 b) Harare 267

1. (SBU) Summary: Justice for Agriculture (JAG) representatives told us they strongly lament the willingness of the Commercial Farmers Union (CFU) to engage the Government of Robert Mugabe on fast-track land reform. JAG remains committed to dialogue with the GOZ only after the restoration of rule-of-law. End Summary.

2. (SBU) JAG reps recently updated Amb. Sullivan on their campaign against Mugabe's land reform. JAG says around 300 members have joined its ranks, which usually entails resigning from the more moderate CFU. The organizations differ more on tactics than assessments of fast-track land reform.

3. (SBU) JAG takes issue with the CFU's restarting a dialogue with the GOZ, analyzed in refs a-b. JAG members feel the GOZ is merely using talks with the CFU as a means of persuading Western governments that a) white farmers now approve of land reform and b) it is time to lift sanctions and support resettled farmers. JAG refuses to speak with the GOZ, which it considers illegitimate.

4. (SBU) Comment: The split among white farmers reflects diverging interests. JAG members have mostly lost farms and wish to pursue title claims indefinitely in the hope of restitution or compensation; CFU members are often still trying to hold onto all or part of their farms. If a successor government one day comes to power, JAG's strident line could prove an impediment to revamping land reform. While we agree that land reform has been unjust and devastating to Zimbabwean agriculture, we do not believe a future government could completely reverse it or pay full compensation. The only way to make sense of the senseless may be a negotiated deal that returns white farmers to a portion of their farms, in exchange for them relinquishing title to the other portion and assisting new farmers. As time wears on, however, such an agreement becomes less and less feasible and we do agree that GOZ dialogue with the CFU to date has been mostly for show with little or no serious effort at compromise.

Sullivan